



Audubon | CONNECTICUT

Environment Committee Public Hearing of March 1, 2019

SUPPORT - House Bill 6637 (Committee Bill) - AN ACT REQUIRING AN INVASIVE SPECIES STAMP FOR THE OPERATION OF A MOTORBOAT ON THE INLAND WATERS OF THE STATE.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit late-filed testimony on behalf of The National Audubon Society through its affiliate state office, Audubon Connecticut.

In general, Audubon has focused its attention on the issue of terrestrial invasive species rather than aquatic invasive species (AIS). Yet, we are encouraged to see that the Environment Committee is examining a pragmatic approach to address the issue of the negative impacts of invasive species. This bill recognizes that resources will be required to return ecosystems negatively impacted by invasive vegetation back into native and healthy ecosystems.

As a matter of history, members of the Committee might wish to review the 2014 CT Environment Committee Informational Forum on Aquatic Invasive Plants that was recorded 1/28/2014 on CT-N (<http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=9856>).

After the forum noted above, in September 2015, the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection issued a press release that stated, in part, “The Connecticut General Assembly first provided funding in 2014 to DEEP for grants to municipalities to conduct diagnostic studies and to conduct projects to restore inland water bodies through the control and management of aquatic invasive species. During the 2015 session, the General Assembly provided funding for an additional year.

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During the 2014 round of grants, a total of \$150,000 were awarded to ten municipalities and one lake authority (representing five municipalities) for studies and control projects on fourteen water bodies scattered throughout the state. The projects selected for funding included two diagnostic studies and ten control projects. Control methods included stocking of triploid (sterile) Grass Carp (an herbivorous fish often used to control aquatic vegetation), herbicide applications and hand-pulling.”

Even after the award of these grants the AIS problem persists throughout Connecticut. Hopefully, this bill will allow Connecticut identify sustained resources to adapt and combat the serious and undoubtedly expanding problem of invasive species.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. Should you have any questions, please contact Leslie Kane, Managing Director, Audubon CT at lkane@audubon.org